

Remarks

The Office Action mailed December 5, 2005 has been carefully considered. In that Action, Claims 17-69 were pending and Claims 17-69 were rejected. Claim 17 is currently amended to clarify that the present invention is water-dispersible, as recited on page 77 of the application as filed. As such, Claims 17-69 remain in the application with none of the claims being allowed. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 17-19, 23, 44-58, 60 and 62-65 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0034903 to Shoemaker et al. (hereinafter “Shoemaker”). Those rejections are traversed. Initially, it is important to note that Shoemaker fails to disclose, achieve or suggest the benefits of applicants’ *water-dispersible* treatment agent.

Synthetic fibers play an important role in our lives. People wear them all over the world, every day. Clothes made from synthetic fibers are attractive to many because they resist moisture absorption and dry quickly. They can become uncomfortable, however, if they trap moisture against the wearer’s body.

To make synthetics more comfortable, the textile industry has focused efforts on treatments for fabrics that transport moisture away from the body and allow fabrics to dry quickly. Shoemaker discloses such an attempt. Shoemaker does not, however, disclose a water-dispersible treatment agent. As a result, those applying Shoemaker’s agent, as well as those wearing fabrics treated by Shoemakers’s agent, may be unnecessarily exposed to dangerous compounds.

Shoemaker discloses a treatment agent in “solution that may be either applied to fabrics by itself or in combination with other processing agents....” (see [0028]). Shoemaker’s solution is a “solution of 1,2-propanediol and water. 1,2-propodediol is used to facilitate the dissolution of the copolymer in water.” (see [0028]). Shoemaker discloses that the use of 1,2-propanediol is preferred over ethanol...because it is not as flammable, it is less toxic, less carcinogenic, less of it may be used, and it has a higher boiling point and so is less fugitive” (see par. [0028];underlining added). Shoemaker’s solution, nonetheless, contains a harmful solvent with the potential to harm those who come into contact with it (see attached Material Safety Data

Sheet for 1,2 propanediol, showing, inter alia, to seek immediate medical advice after skin contact with 1,2 propanediol).

Applicants' treatment agent, however, requires no solvent to facilitate dissolution of the copolymer. Using applicants' treatment, wearers do not risk exposure to such harmful chemicals. Applicants' water-dispersible treatment agent also allows for additional advantages. For example, as taught in applicants' specification:

The polyamide treatment agent made by any of the above-described routes may be distributed as any of a solid and a liquid. For example, a solid may be a flaked or ground agent that may be incorporated in a powdered detergent. Also, for example, a liquid may be an agent diluted in water as a solution or dispersion that is chargeable directly into the textile equipment. Techniques that may be used for a liquid include heating to a high temperature, homogenizing and agitating by high sheer.

Thus wearers can apply treatment agent in the home, e.g. by adding either a liquid or solid to a normal wash cycle. Such an application can take place without exposing the wearer, washer or young children to harmful chemicals that would be required by Shoemaker.

Because Claims 18-69 depend from Claim 17, they include all the limitations contained therein. Additionally, regarding Claims 55, and the claims that depend there from, applicants submit that that Shoemaker fails to disclose the $(C_2H_4O)_b$ limitation of Structure III. Regarding Claims 62-64, it is respectfully submitted that the Office has failed to point out where or how Shoemaker provides the claimed limitations.

It is submitted that all Claims are currently allowable, and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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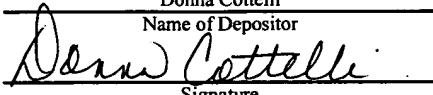
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